

BIG RAILROAD HEARING.

THE COMMITTEE ROOM AT HARTFORD PACKED YESTERDAY.

Powerful Address By Vice President of Hall of the Consolidated Road—The Steam Roads Vs. the Electric Roads—Other Addresses—Other Matters Before the General Assembly Yesterday.

Hartford, March 19.—The room of the committee on railroads was packed with people at 10:30 this morning, the hour at which arguments were to be made before the committee on railroads by attorneys for the steam roads, against pending bills chartering electric roads on parallel routes with the steam roads. The Consolidated road was represented by Vice President Hall and Hon. Henry C. Robinson. Others present included Judge D. B. Lockwood of Bridgeport, Robert E. Colt, president of the New London Northern railroad, Judge Gager of Derby, Attorney Perry of Bridgeport, E. S. Robbins, attorney for the New England road, and Morris F. Seymour of Bridgeport.

Vice President John M. Hall, the first speaker, in a long argument, spoke in part as follows:

MR. HALL'S REMARKS.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Committee:

I appear here to-day with my brother, Robinson, representing the management and interests of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad company, for the purpose of offering suggestions which appear to me reasonable concerning the pending applications for new charters and extensions of electric street railway companies. At the beginning of the discussion I desire to say that the corporation I represent is not here in the attitude of hostility to electric roads, as such, within their legitimate and proper sphere. It recognizes fully both the utility and desirability and necessity and convenience of this mode of transportation in the cities and large towns. It could not if it would, and would not if it could, put any obstacle in the way of the full development of electric communication wherever the actual convenience and necessity of the people demand it.

Let it be understood then that the steam roads are not hostile in any manner to electric roads, as such, within proper and reasonable bounds. The time has come, however, as it seems to us, when the state should adopt some definite policy as to the regulation and restraint of electric roads within proper bounds, so that the vested rights of the steam roads may be fairly protected against unjust and unfair competition. Two years ago an electric wave swept over the state, and the legislature granted a large number of charters under which some roads have been built and many abandoned. The steam roads made no opposition to the electric schemes, except it supposed it had provided that no electric road should cross a steam railroad at grade. It was mistaken.

The legislature thought the general law they had passed covered this ground, but our supreme court found that it did not, and the people made it the first business of this session to amend the law that no more such death traps can be constructed in Connecticut by either electric or steam roads. No one connected with the New Haven road at the time of this wholesale grant of electric charters supposed that there was a scheme developed by the New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York and Massachusetts syndicate, who own almost all the stock of the electric roads in this state, to parallel the Consolidated road's entire length from Springfield to New York. But if you will examine this map which I now show you, you will see that with the roads already built and with the extension now before you for action, the chain is almost complete and only a very few short links will complete it. This shows the direct purpose to parallel, not for the purpose of accommodating the necessities of the public, but to appropriate the highways of the state and to use them to compete with the costly steam roads for its entire length by an absolute system of parallelism. If it be the policy of the state of Connecticut to make a present of the use of its highways to foreign syndicates for the purpose of interfering with the vested rights and property interests of our own citizens, it is time all our people, and especially those who have invested their money in steam railroad property or securities understood it.

Let me call your attention just at this point to the confusion which exists in the discussion of this matter by our setting the electric roads in a class by themselves and the steam roads in another class. The difference between a steam road and an electric road is simply in the method of applying the energy developed by the combustion of coal. The power in the electric road is obtained by stationary boilers and the energy is transmitted over a wire to the point where required for use. The locomotive of the steam road develops the energy by a more wasteful process of combustion but applies it directly to the cylinders which are coupled to the driving wheels as the source of energy moves over the tracks. The ability to move in both cases is created by the friction between the wheels and the rails. The transmission of power to an electric car is applied, by the rotary motion of an electric motor, directly to the axle. If direct steam power could be applied in the same way there would be a great economy, principally because in a locomotive an average of one ton in weight (piston, piston rods, and connecting and parallel rods) come to a full stop and reverse motion twice in every revolution of the driving wheels. This waste is apparent. Theoretically and practically, in small engines it is possible to apply this energy without this reciprocating motion by the use of the rotary steam engine. The difficulty hitherto experienced has been the leakage of valves, and principally it has hitherto been impossible to apply the energy without the intervention of the piston.

The only difference therefore between the so-called steam roads is in the method of applying the energy of coal as developed by combustion, whether the energy shall be applied directly through the intervention of a piston with the disadvantages recited, or whether it shall be conducted by a wire and applied through an electric motor without the intervention of the piston.

Both are steam railroads and when the power can be conducted through a wire, without too much waste, and applied directly to the moving of trains, taking into account the relative costs of the plants and the waste in the transmission through the wire, we shall have settled the question whether application of steam or an application through the intervention of the trolley wire is the most economical and practicable, and then all steam roads will be called electric roads. As, therefore, it is true that the power which moves street railway cars and standard railway trains is precisely the same, we may in the future come to an exact similarity between what is now denominated the electric road and the steam road. The question is therefore whether a steam railroad using the same power, indirectly shall be permitted to have the free use of the highways without restriction or limitation in competition with the companies using steam directly, companies which have bought their own right of way, which are subject to the restrictions of the state as to stationing, as to crossings, as to flagmen and gates, as to reasonable accommodations furnished. It is not a question between direct steam and indirect steam. Both are really steam railroads. The question is not between electricity and steam, but whether your honorable body may recommend and the general assembly may justly authorize the free use of highways in competition with the locations of railroads whose rights of way have been secured at an enormous expenditure of money.

It is a question, therefore, affecting the vested rights of steam railroads under their charters. Some sort-of-a scribbler in New York daily recently wrote a scurrilous article criticizing the management of the Consolidated road for having the audacity to appear before this committee to protest against this proposed project of paralleling every station on its line by electric railways, and the writer purported to represent and express the views of all of these schemes. The subject. The answer to this wall from Wall street is that the New York, New Haven and Hartford railroad never has been run in Wall street, or by Wall street, or for Wall street, and unless Connecticut fails of its duty, it never will be. No, the New York, New Haven and Hartford railroad is a Connecticut institution by birth, the majority of its directors are residents of Connecticut, its headquarters are here, and its stock is scattered in small blocks among hundreds and thousands of Connecticut citizens, men, women and children. It is safe to say that one-half the citizens of Connecticut are directly and indirectly interested in its welfare and prosperity, but not only is it furnishing steady employment to thousands of your citizens, for its stock is held by your great educational, religious and charitable institutions, your life and fire insurance companies, your banks and trust companies and savings banks, where the wealth of the people is invested or deposited. A railroad company is nothing but a limited partnership. The people who have invested their money in this great property demand that the state shall protect their chartered rights and its pledged faith to them against a competition which is unjust and unfair and threatens to greatly impair the value of their property unless the obvious purposes of these schemes shall be checked. What would be said if the Consolidated road should ask to run its trains and cars over the electric roads already constructed? Or to have the free use of the highways of the state for railroad purposes? And yet why should you deny the privilege when you propose to grant the same privilege to the electric roads? The disadvantages to which the steam roads are put by this new competition comes from the immense cost to which it is put, especially in the cities and large towns where the local travel is largest and the best service is demanded. Think for a moment of the millions the New York, New Haven and Hartford railroad has spent in the last seven years to build, for the accommodation of its business and the people of this state, a railroad that shall, when finished, have no superior on this continent! To-day, in the little city of South Norwalk, it is spending nearly \$1,000,000 to eliminate grade crossings and straighten its line. Within a few months it must repeat the work at as high a cost at Stamford, and then comes Bridgeport, where double that amount must be expended to satisfy the public demands for convenience and safety. In doing this the Consolidated road is fulfilling in good faith its duties to the public, and the promises it made the state when it accepted its charter. But can this first-class service and appointments be expected or fairly demanded by the public if the state is to allow a horde of foreign speculators to parallel every station on its line and destroy entirely its local travel?

But our electric friends said two years ago this competition will not have any effect. These roads will act as feeders to your road, they will increase your travel and really benefit you. We have had something more or less than a year of this experience as to the effects of electric competition where it directly parallels our road at different points between stations. We have erected this wind pudding prepared by electricity and found it more filling than fattening. Let me give you a few statistics as to the effects of electric competition at some points upon our main and leased lines in Connecticut.

I give you the figures from the actual business as shown by our accounting department for the last three months of the depreciation in respect of fares which are traced directly to the competition by electric railroads where they parallel our lines between stations. I will take them in the order shown upon the statement I shall submit to the committee.

Between Norwalk and Rowayton, a loss of 50 per cent. of the entire business.

Between Bridgeport and Southport, a loss of 80 per cent. of all business.

Between Bridgeport and Stratford, 35 per cent.

Between New Haven and Woodmont station, 50 per cent. of all.

Between New Haven and West Haven, 70 per cent. of all business.

Between Wallingford and Meriden, 20 per cent. of all business.

Between New Haven and Lake Saltonstall, 45 per cent. of all business.

Between Meriden and Yalesville, about 90 per cent. of all business.

Between Southington and Plantsville, practically all the business.

Between Unionville and Hartford, 40 per cent. of all business.

Hartford and Glastonbury, 30 per cent. of all business.

Between Derby, Ansonia and Birmingham, 90 per cent. of all business.

Between Ansonia and Derby, \$1,500 a year.

Between Naugatuck and Waterbury, \$300 a month.

Between Union City and Waterbury, \$170 per month.

Between Waterbury and Naugatuck, 50 per cent. of all.

Between Winnipauk and South Norwalk, 50 per cent.

Between South Norwalk and Winnipauk, 90 per cent.

Between Norwalk and Rowayton, 50 per cent.

Between Danbury and Bethel, 75 per cent. of all business.

Here you have the actual effects of a few months only of the cheap electric competition upon the passenger earnings of this property alone. Now, is it right and fair to continue to extend these parallel lines across desert wastes of country, to connect town with town, where the steam roads have, at large expense, constructed and equipped their roads and furnished reasonable service and accommodation to the public, especially without some great and crying demand by the citizens themselves and especially against the protests of many of the residents of these towns, who realize that the introduction of electric roads to these suburban retreats will soon cost them the loss of many towns will suffer in the reason that they believed they were escaping from the noise and danger of the trolley? Above all, do you consider it fair and reasonable to suppose that the steam railroad will continue to furnish frequent train service at these stations at a constant loss? If you are to permit this destructive competition, made possible by the free use of your highways to the trolley roads, and in justice such an extension of frequent train service from the steam roads. The steam roads cannot be used as a convenient conveyance in cold or stormy weather. Is Milford with 3,500 people and thirty-eight passenger trains a day to expect a continuance of this service if it adopts two electric roads? In self-defense it will be obliged to withdraw many of its trains, and so the towns will suffer in the end as well as the railroad. All this means cheaper service, diminished earnings, less ability to furnish first class accommodation to the people of Connecticut, because some foreign syndicates think they can make money by monopolizing the free highways of Connecticut and appropriating them to their own private uses.

WHAT IS THE REMEDY?

What is the remedy? To my mind it is to confine electric railways to their legitimate limits as street railroads. What was the original conception and design of a street railway? Was it not designed and intended simply to take the place of the omnibus or the hack or the barge? And to be used simply as a cheap and convenient conveyance within the city or town? The street railway was never designed or intended to furnish transportation from one city to another. All the old horse railroad charters in this state which have recently been galvanized into new life and energy by the infusion of the electric current were granted by the state with no thought that they were to exist or operate beyond the limits of the town in which they were located. This is the proper limit within which this style of transportation should be confined. The city or large town and its immediate suburbs should be the extent to which street railway companies should be limited, and this only where there is a public necessity and a general demand for the convenience by the people who reside in these suburban portions and never against their protest. Neither railroad speculators nor land speculators for their own private gain should be allowed to force their accommodations upon people who do not ask them. There is money enough to be made by the electric railroads within the cities and large towns and their immediate suburbs. To these limits they should be confined and there they should be compelled to provide the same safeguards and conveniences—depots, flagmen, gates, first class cars and appointments—that steam railroads are compelled to furnish their patrons. In other words, every application for a charter, which parallels an existing steam railroad outside the limits of a city or large town, should be firmly refused. The steam roads should be allowed to do the business of the towns which they can accommodate and through which their line has been built, and to accommodate which they have expended large sums of money. The facts I have represented to you, it seems to me, are sufficient to satisfy you that the time has come when the legislature should say to the promoters of electric street railways, "Thus far and no further." In regard to the immediate application before you I propose to consider them briefly in their order as shown upon our map. In regard to any of these schemes which appear to have been invented to sell to the highest bidder, I assume the committee will dispose of quickly and effectually.

In regard to these charters, as well as to the extension of the proposed construction under any charters heretofore granted, I desire once more to urge the committee to see to it that in case they should report favorably upon any of these charters, that they will attach to them the standard amendment providing that nothing in any such charter extended, amended, or granted shall authorize the construction of any electric railway across the tracks of any steam railway at grade. The recent decision of the supreme court seems to make this amendment necessary in order to be sure that the intention of the legislature as expressed in the general law passed this session upon that subject shall be effective.

Judge Hall then took up each charter proposed and pointed out the objections to such proposed charter and showed why it should not be amended or granted as proposed.

Judge Hall's address was listened to with the closest attention. He was followed by E. B. Dobbins of the New England road and by Hon. Robert E. Colt of the New London and Northern road, who spoke against the proposed paralleling. The closing argument was by Hon. Henry C. Robinson of the Consolidated road, who spoke in part as follows:

"There are two points we urge upon this committee. First, in every electric road charter place a provision that

there shall be no crossing of a steam road by electric, and vice versa. The legislature has done nobly in the general law, but the supreme court has drawn a very fine point of comparison between the general and the private law. These links of electric road are well enough in themselves, but they provide a merger by which they are united together in parallel, competing lines. There is friction in the use of highways, but all these interests should be harmonized in a proper manner. You are to look at this question not in regard to the gentlemen who are interested in these competing roads, but it is a question of general policy. A state is nothing without railroads. I am not to argue that railroads are necessary, and we in this state are dependent upon a good railroad service for life.

The steam roads have no quarrel with the electric roads in their proper sphere, and here it is your duty to call a halt. If these roads are to be laid out as a parallel line from New York to Springfield it is your duty to put a stop upon it. The paralleling process, backed by all kinds of money, has come up from time to time, but the state has always put its foot on it and looked upon it as a nuisance. Parallel roads are not to be tolerated unless they are a necessity. If there is a need of greater service the steam roads can multiply their facilities for transportation ten fold. A parallel road is not always a geographical parallel, but it is a commercial parallel. Is it fair, right or wise to build these lines right along beside these steam roads? And to leave the steam roads to be carriers of through passengers and freight, with no local business? This state spends \$2,000,000 annually in its expenses, and of this sum it receives \$772,000 from the railroads in taxes. Is it right to take away their earning power from the steam roads and put this sum that the taxes represent back upon the towns? I say, in all fairness, this paralleling should not be permitted.

THE WASHINGTON BRIDGE.

A meeting of the sub-committee of the Fairfield and New Haven counties was held this morning upon the Bridgeport Traction company's petition for a franchise to cross the Washington bridge over the Housatonic river. The New Haven commissioners wanted the traction company to pay \$1,000 to each of the counties, but no agreement was reached. It is probable that sum will be agreed upon, however. There are also provisions in the proposed agreement looking to the safe operation of cars on the bridge.

SPECIAL TAX FOR BICYCLES.

Dr. Smith of Canterbury appeared before the committee on roads, bridges and rivers to-day in behalf of his bill providing that every bicycle be taxed on a valuation of \$50. He said the sums raised could be used by the towns in clearing loose stones from the roads, thus making them better tracks for wheelmen. Several gentlemen opposed the bill, claiming that bicycles were taxed in some towns and the law should be left optional to tax them, or not to tax. The committee will undoubtedly kill the bill.

SENATE.

The senate was in session only a few minutes this afternoon and passed these bills: Amending the charter of the city of Hartford; incorporating the Stratford Library association; concerning fishing in Salmon river; concerning licenses for oyster boats; concerning fishing in Lake Kenosia.

HOUSE.

In the house this afternoon Judge Elmer presided. A favorable report was made on the bill incorporating the Co-operative Savings society of Connecticut.

These bills started on the calendar were passed: Substitute bill concerning school property in town of Bethel; extending the time for organizing the Canaan Trust and Safe Deposit company; reimbursing the town of East Hartford for burial expenses of soldiers; amending section 93 of the general statutes, concerning mechanics' liens; bill concerning corporations; bills concerning rooms and tenements used for immoral purposes; concerning the election in the town of Essex; concerning foreign attachments.

The resolution providing that the New Haven law library shall receive an appropriation of \$1,500 was explained by Judge Cowell of Waterbury. He said the Yale Law school was erecting a new building, and the county having previously depended largely upon the law library, it would now require one of its own. The bill was passed.

Representative Judson explained the bill concerning appeals from justices. He said that in cases of profane swearing there was no appeal from the justices. He favored the bill providing for an appeal.

Representative Newton of New Haven said that in cases of profane swearing the fine was only \$1. He did not see why the judiciary committee should criticize the present law.

The bill concerning qualifications of electors and providing that they should read the English language elicited a debate reaching over half an hour. It was favored by Whitton of Manchester, Warner of Windham, Judson of Stratford and Green of Norwich. Several persons opposed the bill. When the motion to table was made half a dozen members were on their feet at once seeking recognition from the chair.

Mr. Judson of Stratford moved that the bill be put over until to-morrow. The motion ordering that the main question be put was rejected. The bill was then tabled.

HERE AND THERE.

The final hearing before the judiciary committee on the Hartford bridge matter was held this morning. Judge Cole of Hartford made the final argument for the Berlin Iron Bridge company, to the effect that the commission had full power to give the contract. Mr. Nickerson of Litchfield replied, claiming that the contract was entirely illegal.

J. L. Cowles of Farmington spoke in favor of regulations providing for a parcel post service.

Senator Marigold of the committee on cities and boroughs said to-day that it was doubtful if the hearing on the New Haven charter bills would go on next Tuesday, the date agreed upon, as some of the attorneys were likely to be absent.

H. B. S. ENTERTAINMENT.

A Coming Social Event—Much Interest Awakened—The Program for the Affair.

On Friday evening, March 22, an entertainment will be given for the benefit of the Hillhouse high school Athletic association, under the auspices of the Crescent. An unusually attractive program has been arranged by the management. It will consist of two parts.

Part one includes two selections by the well known Espagnola Mandolin club of this city, and one by the Young Ladies' Mandolin club of Hillhouse high school. Mr. E. C. Bennett will also assist with one selection. The famous Schneeloch sisters, who formerly sang with Gilmore as his soloists, have been secured by unexpected good fortune, and will again delight a New Haven audience after an absence of three years. Mrs. Schneeloch-Busse at present resides in Philadelphia, but has agreed to come on purpose to sing.

Mrs. Schneeloch-Bacon resides in this city and has kindly consented to sing with her sister. The program of part I is as follows:

FIRST PART.

"Pique Dame Overture,"

Espagnola Mandolin Club.

Duet—"Invito,"

Mrs. Schneeloch-Busse and Mrs. Schneeloch-Bacon.

Selection,

Young Ladies' Mandolin Club of Hillhouse High School.

Solo—"A Merry Life,"

Mr. E. C. Bennett.

Duet—"Selected,"

Mrs. Schneeloch-Busse and Mrs. Schneeloch-Bacon.

"Simple Asylum,"

Thorne.

"Cello Solo by H. S. Arnold."

The second part of the program is a play written for the occasion by W. B. Starkweather '95, the editor-in-chief of the Crescent. It will be presented by the Crescent Dramatic club, who made such a success in their play last year. The club has secured the valuable assistance of Mr. W. Vernon Sumner, the well known actor, and for several months have been uniting in their efforts to make the play a success and to increase the fund in the treasury of the H. B. S. A. A., to which the proceeds of the entertainment are to be unconditionally given. The cast of characters follows:

A BOARDING HOUSE IDYL.

By William B. Starkweather '95.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

Mr. Lawrence Page, a banker..... J. L. Gilson

Viol Page, his daughter..... F. S. Hunn

Gregory Page, his son..... M. W. Bradley

Victor Page, his son..... C. W. Welles

Mrs. Snuggles, boarding house keeper..... F. B. Merrells

Kate, her servant..... J. E. McIntyre

Peter, a policeman..... R. S. Kearney

Mr. Alphonso Slammerson Smith..... H. C. Cheney

J. Sambo Black, colored servant..... A. M. Gray

Miss Rose Sophronia Singley..... W. B. Starkweather

Major Blunderbuss, U. S. A., F. G. Beck

After the play an informal dance will be given, to which all are invited.

A VERY NEAT WORK.

Fen Drawing of the "Old Light," Executed by James Kane.

A very pretty and artistic pen drawing is on exhibition in Cutler's art store window. It is a sketch of the "Old Light" at Lighthouse Point, seen from the north. The picture is true to nature, perfect in shading and perspective. The lighthouse stands out prominently with every little detail showing as perfectly as in a photograph. The eastern end of the new breakwater, which extends from the new light, can be seen.

The picture is about four by eight inches and looks very modest among an array of etchings and art vases. Many passers-by, however, stopped to admire its simple beauty and perfection. The picture is the work of James Kane of Mansfield street. Mr. Kane is employed in the draughting room at Sargent & Co.'s. The picture is the first that he has ever placed on exhibition. It reflects much credit on its maker. The picture was made entirely freehand with a crow-quill pen. The work was a tax on endurance and patience much to be admired.

Knights of the Golden Eagle.

Crusaders' Castle No. 3, Knights of the Golden Eagle, will give a complimentary entertainment at their rooms in Golden Rule hall this evening. The program will be varied to some extent, but will consist mostly of music and songs, with comic declamations by some of the Elm City's best amateurs. Talent from Hartford have been engaged, also the West Side Banjo club, the Mount Laurel quartet, also Master Morris Porter in his famous piano solos.

Revival Meetings.

Revival meetings are being held this week every night at the Howard avenue Baptist church. Rev. Mr. Poterast spoke last night to a full house. Rev. P. S. Evans, Rev. E. C. Sage, Ph. D., and Mr. W. H. Spear are the speakers for the remaining evenings of the week.

The Plainville Camp Meeting.

The trustees of the New Haven District Camp Ground association met in the Trinity Methodist Episcopal church, New Britain, Saturday. The time for the next camp meeting was arranged to commence on Monday, July 29, to continue until Saturday, August 3. This is earlier than the meeting has ever been held, but it was thought that it would accommodate the preachers better. It is hoped that this early date for the meeting will not incommode the farmers who are an important factor in the attendance on these meetings. The assembly will commence on Monday, August 5. Both the camp meeting and the assembly had a largely increased attendance last fall. Several fine society and private cottages were built. Since the close of the society at Forestville has erected a cottage on its new lot. Presiding Elder North will preside at the camp meeting and the following committee will have charge of the assembly: Rev. E. L. Thorpe, D. D., chairman, with Rev. E. K. Young, D. D., of New Britain and Rev. W. A. Richard of Hartford, associate members.

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